



Jane Austen Society of North America Southwest June 2016 Newsletter



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**Jane Austen in
the News!**

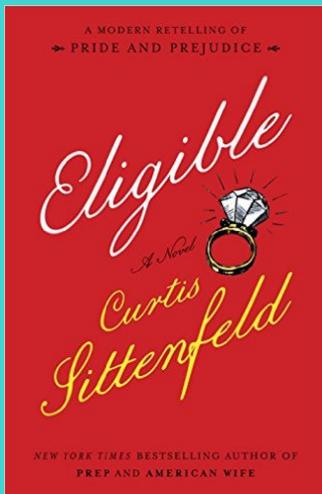


JASNA-Southwest

Spring Meeting Recap



The New Yorker recently highlighted the [loan of "the shirt"](#) worn by Colin Firth in the 1995 *Pride and Prejudice* to The Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, D.C.



PBS NewsHour recently featured an [interview with Curtis Sittenfeld](#), author of *Eligible*, a modern retelling of *Pride and Prejudice*.



Tickets are now on sale for the production of *Sense and*

Emma on Board

JASNA-Southwest members and guests boarded the historic Queen Mary in Long Beach, California, for the Spring 2016 Meeting, with the theme "Emma On Board," in celebration of the 200th anniversary of the publication of *Emma*.

More than a hundred attendees gathered in the elegant Queen's Salon for a full day of speakers and activities, beginning with a talk by Juliet McMaster -- renowned 19th century English literature scholar, frequent presenter at JASNA Annual General Meetings, founder of Juvenilia Press, and co-author of *The Cambridge Companion to Jane Austen*, among many other works.



McMaster began by reading from her late husband's paper "I Hate to Hear of Women on Board," which opens with the discussion from *Persuasion* between Captain Wentworth, his sister and Admiral Croft about whether women can be made comfortable aboard a ship. She described Austen's seafaring brothers Charles and Francis, and their contrasting approaches to military

service during a time in Britain's history rife with war. McMaster then explored the female experience at sea, sharing details of four types of women on board during Austen's era: ladies, below-deck wives, prostitutes and women serving in the Navy dressed as men. She also enlightened the audience about the origin of the phrase "son of a gun," which was how a baby born on a Naval vessel was entered on the ship's register.

Sensibility at the [Old Globe theatre](#) in San Diego (run is July 6-August 14).

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Next, JASNA-Southwest member and Chapman University Professor Lynda Hall presented "Miss Bates: Superfluous Spinster or Sympathetic Spectator?" While Miss Bates is an important catalyst in the heroine's transformation, Hall explained that Austen also uses the spinster to highlight the relative value of unmarried women in early 19th century England. Miss Bates is the opposite of "handsome, clever, and rich," she noted. "Within the narrative space, Miss Bates fights against her lack of importance, foreshadowing the poverty Harriet Smith might face if she does not marry Mr. Martin and the confinement that Jane Fairfax will need to endure if she does not marry Frank Churchill -- even as she represents the meddling bore that Emma might become if she were to remain single."

Hall added that we understand the worth of other characters by how they treat Miss Bates. For instance, she compared Mr. Knightley's subtle and anonymous patronage with Frank Churchill's selfishness and Mrs. Elton's exultation of her status as "lady patroness." She also emphasized how Miss Bates' long speeches lure the reader into inattention, which works as a key plot device.

McMaster returned to discuss "Destined ... for the Sea": The Hero of *Catharine, or the Bower* -- a work from Austen's juvenilia. She shared her theory on how Austen would have finished the story, and also signed copies of numerous publications she illustrated for Juvenilia Press.



Following lunch, which included a quiz on famous first lines from a wide range of novels, Bernie Su -- an executive producer and head writer for the award-winning digital series *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* and *Emma Approved* -- took the stage. He was joined by several lead actors from the latter series: Joanna Sotomura (Emma Woodhouse), Brent Bailey (Alex Knightley), Dayeanne Hutton (Harriet Smith) and James Brent Isaacs (Robert "BMart" Marin).



Joanna Sotomura (Emma) and Brent Bailey (Knightley)

The panel discussed the making of *Emma Approved*, its multicultural casting, their favorite moments from the series, the challenges and joys of translating Austen's work to present-era Los Angeles, and much more. "I felt like we did a fairly accurate job of representing Austen's Emma," said Sotomura, who credited the writers with making that happen. "She's just as stubborn and unlikeable in the beginning of our show as she is in the novel."

Isaacs drew considerable applause when he declared being was a longtime Austen aficionado. When he was being considered for the role, he said he wrote to the producers: "And this is a direct quote: 'I have loved and read every Jane Austen novel.'"

Although Isaacs and numerous others involved in series and its predecessor already knew and appreciated Austen, Su noted that the production company, Pemberley Digital, has introduced thousands of new fans to her work.



Bernie Su and Lynda Hall



Bernie Su, Joanna Sotomura, Brent Bailey, Dayeanne Hutton and James Brent Issacs

2016 AGM Registration



Online registration for this year's Annual General Meeting of the Jane Austen Society of North America begins Wednesday, June 8 at noon, Eastern Daylight time. Mark your calendars!

In the meantime, an online version of the AGM brochure is available now on [JASNA's AGM website](#).

Reading Groups Upcoming Meetings/Info

Send us photos from your reading group so we can share them here, on our Facebook page and/or the JASNA-SW website.

Saturday, June 11, 1:30 p.m.

Westside/405 Reading Group

The Shuttle by Frances Hodgson Burnett

Location: home of Syrie James

For more information, contact [Karen Berk](#), 310-477-6753.

Sunday, June 12, 6 p.m.

Santa Monica Reading Group

Members' choice of book by one of the Mitford sisters (Nancy, Jessica or Deborah)

Location: Diana Birchall's Santa Monica home

For more information, contact [Diana Birchall](#), 310-394-2196.

Sunday, June 12, 1:30-4:30 p.m.

West Los Angeles Reading Group

Jane Eyre by Charlotte Bronte

Discussion leader: Dr. Charles Lynn Batten

This group is at capacity and cannot accept new members. Current members may contact [Clara Browda](#), 310-278-8759, for more information on upcoming meetings.

The Westside/405 Reading Group is accepting new members. For more information, contact [Karen Berk](#), 310-477-6753.

Saturday, June 25, 1:30 p.m.

Long Beach Reading Group

Aristocrats: Caroline, Emily, Louisa, and Sarah Lennox, 1740-1832, by Stella Tillyard

For more information, contact [Gerda Kilgore](#), 562-496-4452.

Sunday, July 17, 12:30 p.m.

Orange County Reading Group

Alfresco reading of Tracy Neis' play *Box Hill Picnic*, complete with lemonade and fresh strawberries

Location: TriCity Park, Fullerton

For more information, contact [Viki Barie](#), 714-309-6702.

Sunday, July 17

Pasadena Area Reading Group

Miss Buncle's Book by D. E. Stevenson

This group is at capacity and cannot accept members. Current members may contact [Susan Ridgeway](#), 626-357-1397, for information on upcoming meetings.

The San Gabriel Valley Reading Group is accepting new members. Contact [Kelly Duir](#), 909-967-6630.

Sunday, July 17, 1 p.m.

NEW Riverside Reading Group

Emma by Jane Austen; *Eligible* by Curtis Sittenfeld

Location: Home of Cristi Hendry

For more information, contact [Cristi Hendry](#).

Sunday, July 17, 2-4 p.m.

San Fernando Valley Reading Group

The Prime Minister by Anthony Trollope

For more information, contact [Cheryl Cole](#), 310-422-5475.

Sunday, July 24, 2-4 p.m.

South Bay Reading Group

Lady Susan by Jane Austen

The film *Love and Friendship* also will be discussed. New and returning members are welcome.

For more information, contact [Jeanine Holguin](#), 805-444-8999.

Saturday, July 30, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.

San Gabriel Valley Reading Group

Middlemarch, by George Eliot

Location: MSAG meeting room in Claremont

The group will host a potluck lunch.

For more information, contact [Kelly Duir](#), 909-967-6630.

Additional Reading Groups

Riverside County Reading Group

Meetings are held at the Temecula Public Library, 30600 Pauba Road, Temecula, in Community Room B. For more information, contact [Rebecca Weersing](#), 951-595-7046.

San Diego Reading Group

Although San Diego is a separate JASNA region, many JASNA-Southwest members are interested in San Diego JASNA events and vice versa. For information on upcoming San Diego JASNA meetings, contact [Jeanne Talbot](#), 808-342-0666.

Join us on Facebook

Are you on Facebook? So is JASNA-SW! Stay connected in between our meetings and e-newsletter updates, share your Austen-related stories, favorites, travel and more with fellow Janeites!

